

Message Text

SECRET

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14-11

ACTION EA-06

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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

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INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

S E C R E T JAKARTA 4666

LIMDIS

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR ID XC

SUBJ: INDONESIAN ATTITUDE ON INDOCHINA

1. IN FRANKEST EXPRESSION OF INDONESIAN ATTITUDE TOWARD
US ROLE IN INDOCHINA WHICH I HAVE YET RECEIVED,
MINISTER OF STATE SUDHARMONO ON APRIL 18 EXPRESSED HIS
KEEN "DISAPPOINTMENT" WITH UNITED STATES.

2. SUDDHARMONO, WHO IS PRINCIPAL AIDETO PRESIDENT SUHARTO,
SAID HE WAS SPEAKING PERSONALLY BUT REPORTING WIDESPREAD
FEELING IN INDONESIA THAT US HAD NOT MET ITS RESPONSIBILITIES
IN INDOCHINA. GIVEN EQUIPMENT THAT WILL FALL INTO COMMUNIST
HANDS, WE ARE ACTUALLY HELPING COMMUNISTS.

3. I SAID I TOOK STRONG EXCEPTION TO HIS COMMENTS. US
HAD MADE MAJOR SACRIFICE IN PART OF WORLD WHERE WE HAD
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NO SPECIAL INTERESTS. WE HAD LOST 50,000 MEN AND HAD

MANY MORE WOUNDED. WE HAD ALSO DONE MUCH OF THIS LARGELY ALONE. NOT ONLY HAD WE LACKED WIDESPREAD INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FROM NON-COMMUNIST COUNTRIES, BUT WE WERE ACTUALLY THROUGHOUT CRITICIZED BY MANY OF OUR FRIENDS. I RECOGNIZED INDONESIA WAS EXCEPTION SINCE INDONESIA HAD GIVEN STRONG SUPPORT TO CAMBODIA BUT SUCH SUPPORT WAS RARE. PART OF CURRENT PROBLEM STEMS FROM FACT THAT AMERICANS HAVE SHOULDERED MAJOR BURDEN AND RECEIVED LITTLE CREDIT OR PRAISE IN RETURN. WE DID WHAT WE COULD AND IT SEEMS HARDLY FAIR TO HOLD US RESPONSIBLE FOR A COLLAPSE IN VIETNAM OWING TO MILITARY MOVES AND WITHDRAWALS ABOUT WHICH WE WERE NOT CONSULTED.

4. GENERAL SUDHARMONO REACTED WELL TO REBUTTAL SAYING HE HAD NOT MEANT TO BE SO BLUNT. WE SHOULD KNOW THAT INDONESIANS ARE GREATLY CONCERNED ABOUT INDOCHINESE EVENTS AND PERHAPS HIS EMOTIONS OVERCAME HIM.

5. HE THEN ASKED WHETHER I HAD ASSESSMENT OF WHETHER SITUATION IN INDOCHINA WOULD DEVELOP ACCORDING TO "DREAM OF HO CHI-MINH" WITH ALL OF FORMER FRENCH INDOCHINA CONSOLIDATED INTO ONE STRONG COMMUNIST NATION. I SAID I DID NOT HAVE ANY PREDICTION ON THIS. IT WOULD APPEAR TO DEPEND ON ATTITUDES OF CHINA AND SOVIET UNION AND INDIVIDUAL GROUPS WITHIN INDOCHINA NONE OF WHICH WERE YET TOTALLY CLEAR. IN REPLY TO QUESTION ABOUT WHETHER WE THOUGHT INDOCHINESE STATES WOULD NOW BE CONCENTRATING ON INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT OR WOULD PUSH STILL FURTHER OUTWARD, I SAID AGAIN WE DID NOT HAVE PRECISE ASSESSMENT. I ASSUMED SOVIET UNION AND CHINA MIGHT BE LESS WILLING PROVIDE HELP TO EXPANSIONIST HANOI INVOLVED IN STRUGGLE AGAINST ANOTHER ASIAN COUNTRY THAN THEY WERE TO HANOI INVOLVED IN STRUGGLE WITHIN INDOCHINA.

6. I SAID I HOPED THAT WHAT US HAD DONE IN INDOCHINA COULD BE SEEN POSITIVELY SINCE NEXT FEW WEEKS IN US WOULD BE CRITICAL IN TERMS OUR FUTURE FOREIGN POLICY IN ASIA. AS AMERICAN INTERESTED IN CONTINUED INTERNATIONAL ROLE, I FELT REAL QUESTION WAS WHETHER OUR PEOPLE WOULD NOW LOOK MORE POSITIVELY TOWARD FREE NATIONS OF SOUTH-

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EAST ASIA. US CONGRESS AND OTHERS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE INFLUENCED IN FUTURE INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK BY DEGREE OF UNDERSTANDING SHOWN TOWARD OUR PEACE EFFORTS AND SACRIFICES IN INDOCHINA. GENERAL SUDHARMONO SAID HE UNDERSTOOD AND SAID HE WAS SURE INDONESIA WOULD WANT US TO CONTINUE TO PLAY SIGNIFICANT ROLE.

7. HE THEN ASKED WHETHER GENERAL PANGGABEAN, IN DIS-

CUSSIONS WITH GENERAL BROWN, HAD HAD ANY VIEWS ON INDO-CHINESE SITUATION. I SAID I WOULD SUM UP VIEW OF INDO-NESEAN MILITARY AS WE HEARD IT THAT THEY REGRETTEED COLLAPSE IN INDOCHINA BUT WERE NOT SURPRISED. THEY WISH EVENTS WOULD HAVE TURNED OUT OTHERWISE AND THAT THEY WOULD HAVE HAD LONGER TO ADJUST TO COMMUNIST INDOCHINA. SUCCESS INDONESIA'S INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT BECOME INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT NOW AS THREAT OF SUBVERSION INCREASES. THEY STILL HOPE FOR US HELP AND PRESENCE. SUDHARMONO COMMENTED THAT THAT WAS ACCURATE STATEMENT OF GENERAL INDONESIAN MILITARY ATTITUDE. NEWSOM

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